**WRIT 106**: **College Writing II**

**Arguing about Literature**

**[Add FYW Program policies here, as outlined in the Syllabus Checklist]**

**Required Text**

* Schilb, John and John Clifford. *A Brief Guide to Arguing about Literature*, 3rd Ed. New York: Bedford/St.Martin’s, 2020.
* Additional readings can be found in the open-source textbook, [*Writing Commons*.](https://writingcommons.org/)

**Course Schedule**

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| **Module One: Writing in Response to an Argument** |  |
| **Class 1:** Introductions; taking a tour of Canvas and the syllabus; signing up for WC Online. | **Homework due next time**  Read**:** The syllabus    Write: Discussion board entry: past experiences with writing |
| **Class 2**: Practice making arguments: read *AAL* p. 37-42 and discuss questions together. | **Homework due next time**  Read: Chapter 1, “What is Argument?” *Arguing about Literature (AAL)* p. 1-14    Write: Discussion board entry: apply one or two of the rhetorical terms from this chapter to a short opinion piece text that you find in a reputable online news publication. |
| **Class 3**: Review rhetorical terms from Chapter 1; share discussion board entries from homework; assign Writing in Response to an Argument essay. | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Early draft of Writing in Response to an Argument** **essay** **due on Canvas by class time** |
| **Class 4**: Practice peer review session using the essay in *AAL* p. 33-35; practice analyzing written arguments together, *AAL* p. 15-22 | **Homework due next time**  Read: Chapter 2 (*AAL)*, “Writing Effective Arguments” p. 27-32    Write: Bring a copy of your current draft to class. |
| **Class 5**: Work on developing the subclaims in your essay; practice incorporating evidence from your chosen text into your analysis | **Homework due next time**  Write**: Middle draft due on Canvas by class time--bring a hard copy to class.** |
| **Class 6**: Peer review—read essays out loud to your group members. | **Homework due next time**  Write: Continue working on your middle draft of Writing in Response to an Argument essay. |
| **Class 7**: Analyze both a first draft and a revised draft of a student essay (AAL p. 120-130); introduce writer’s letter prompt. | **Homework due next time**  Read: Chapter 5 (*AAL*) “The Writing Process” p. 104-116. |
| **Class 8**:  Assign Arguing about Literature (documented essay) prompt. Read sample poem in *AAL* + student annotation (p. 92-96) | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Final draft of Writing in Response to an Argument + writer’s letter due next class, on Canvas by class time.** |
| **Module Two: Arguing about Literature (documented essay)** |  |
| **Class 9**: Reviewing the elements of poetry (*AAL* p. 165-170; 173-175) | **Homework due next time**  Read: Chapter 3 (*AAL*), “How to Argue about Literature” p. 43-61; Chapter 4 (*AAL*) “The Reading Process” p. 96-103    Write: Discussion board entry: Using either the Milton poem (p.64) or the Frost poem (p. 65), write an analysis of the poem using any of the terms on p. 50-55. |
| **Class 10**: Crafting research questions; determining reliable sources (*AAL* Ch. 8, p. 266-272) | **Homework due next time**  Read: [“Summarizing”](https://writingcommons.org/section/evidence/reasoning-with-evidence/summarize-more-concisely/) and [“Paraphrasing”](https://writingcommons.org/section/evidence/weaving-evidence-into-texts/paraphrases/) (*Writing Commons*)  Write: Discussion board entry: Share your possible topics and research questions. |
| **Class 11** Further refining of research questions; tour of our library’s online resources; mini-lesson on a grammatical issue I saw trending in the last set of essays. | **Homework due next time**  Read: [“Incorporating Evidence Appropriately”](https://writingcommons.org/article/integrating-evidence-appropriately/) and [“Connecting Evidence to Your Claims”](https://writingcommons.org/section/evidence/reasoning-with-evidence/connecting-evidence-to-your-claims/) (*Writing Commons*)    Write: Discussion board entry: What are some questions/concerns that you have about avoiding academic dishonesty? What would you like to discuss or practice further in class in this area? |
| **Class 12**:  Discuss academic honesty, drawing from your discussion posts; review and practice recognizing logical fallacies, *AAL* p. 116-120. | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Early draft of Arguing about Literature due on Canvas by class time--bring a hard copy to class.** |
| **Class 13**: Workshop your central claims; practice effective transitions between paragraphs. | **Homework due next time**  Read: Chapter 4 *AAL* p. 82-91  Write: Discussion board entry: Find a short poem at poetry.org and write a short analysis that applies one or more of the strategies on p. 82-85. |
| **Class 14**: Documentation workshop: *AAL* p. 207-216; share poems and insights from your discussion board posts. | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Arguing about Literature middle draft due in your conference with me.** |
| **Class 15**: Individual conferences in my office for middle draft feedback. | **Homework due next time**  Write: Continue working on your draft |
| **Class 16**: Individual conferences in my office for middle draft feedback. | **Homework due next time**  Write: Continue working on your draft; bring a copy to class next time. |
| **Class 17**: Editing/proofreading workshop; working on concision(Lanham approach) | **Homework due next time**  Write**: Final draft of Arguing about Literature + writer’s letter due on Canvas by class time.** |
| **Module Three: Arguing with/against a Frame** |  |
| **Class 18**:  Flex day to adjust schedule as needed | **Homework due next time**  Read: Joyce’s “Eveline” (*AAL* p. 299-306)  Write: Discussion board post: pick one of the lenses discussed on |
| **Class 19**:  Go over critical lenses and apply to Joyce’s “Counterparts” (*AAL* Appendix p. 293-299); assign Arguing With/Against a Frame essay | **Homework due next time**  Read: Sample student essay on “Counterparts” (AAL p. 312-314)    Write: Discussion board post: answer 2 of the 5 questions about the student essay on p. 314-315. |
| **Class 20**:Brainstorm essay topics; review what you wrote for your discussion board posts. | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Early draft of Arguing With/Against a Frame essay due on Canvas by class time--bring a hard copy to class.** |
| **Class 21**: Early peer review; mini-lesson on a grammatical issue I saw trending in the last set of essays. | **Homework due next time**  Write:Work on your Arguing With/Against a Frame essay; bring a copy to class next time. |
| **Class 22**: Work on drafting counterclaims for your essay. | **Homework due next time**  Write: Discussion board post: List two of your claims from your essay and generate counterclaims; how will you respond to those counterclaims? |
| **Class 23**: Review discussion board posts and refine counterclaims. | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Middle draft of your Arguing With/Against a Frame due on Canvas by class time** |
| **Class 24**: Peer review. | **Homework due next time**  Write: Continue revising your draft; bring a copy to class next time. |
| **Class 25**: Editing/proofreading workshop. | **Homework due next time**  Write: Continue working on your draft. Have access to all your previous work in class next time. |
| **Class 26**: Assign the final portfolio; begin writing a revision plan for the essay(s) that you will revise. | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Final draft of Arguing With/Against a Frame + writer’s letter due on Canvas by class time.** |
| **Module Four: Compiling a Portfolio OR Final Reflection** |  |
| **Class 27**: Assign the portfolio OR Final Reflection**.** | **Homework due next time**  Write: Bring the reflection portion of your portfolio to class next time. |
| **Class 28**: Peer review reflections; individual conferencing with me about portfolios OR Final Reflection. | **Homework due next time**  Write: Continue working on your final portfolio OR Final Reflection. |
| **Class 29**: Final Portfolio OR Final Reflection workshop: evaluating claims, making revisions, editing and proofreading for clarity. | **Homework due next time**  Write: **Final portfolio OR Final Reflection due on Canvas by class next time.** |
| **Class 30**: Course wrap-up andcelebration of writing. | Have a terrific summer! |

**Essay One: Writing in Response to an Argument**

For this essay, you will develop a response to an argument that focuses on a topic of your choosing. You will build on the analytical skills that you developed in WRIT 105 in order to write a well-reasoned response to a published argument.

In order to respond to an argument, however, you must first be able to summarize the argument. Therefore, the first part of your essay will include a brief summary of the argument that you are responding to. The bulk of the essay will focus on an argument of your own.

Due Dates:

Early Draft: Class 4

Middle Draft: Class 6

Final draft: Class 9

Requirements:

Successful essays will:

* Accurately represents the argument(s) presented in a published text of your choosing
* Demonstrates careful analysis of that chosen text
* Provide clear, logical responses organized in well-developed paragraphs
* Support your ideas with evidence from the article as well as from your experiences.
* Incorporate sources and examples as needed to fully support ideas
* Provide correct MLA parenthetical citation and documentation on a Works Cited page of all sources.

Steps

1. Select and read the text you want to respond to
2. Annotate and summarize the text
3. Develop your responses through brainstorming, freewriting, and other idea generation activities
4. Consider researching for additional evidence
5. Draft and revise
6. Proofread and polish

**Summary**

The summary is a very brief description of what the piece you are responding to is about. Most of the time, unless summarizing a very large work or otherwise instructed, a summary should be no more than a paragraph. The purpose of the summary is to introduce the title of the work and author and cover the main ideas of the piece. Below are tips to keep in mind as you are writing your summary:

* Include the title and author’s full name.
* Explain the main ideas being presented.
* Do not go into specific details unless they relate to your response.
* Minimize the use of quotes
* Use strong verbs like “claims,” “supports,” “analyzes,” and “discusses” instead of “says” or “talks.”
* Be objective and do not include your opinion.
* Be concise and avoid wordiness.
* Make your summary clear so that someone who has not read the original material can still understand

**Response**

Your response is the focus of this essay. It should address the topic and ideas in the original material and not discuss whether you liked or disliked the piece. A response is a critical look at the subject. Think deeply about what the author has to say on the topic and then reflect on your ideas about the subject. When writing a response, keep the emphasis on your argument. You may agree, disagree, or both agree and disagree with the author. No matter which way you go, add something new to the conversation. If you agree with the argument, expand on it. If you disagree, explain why and expand. Your response may cover the whole text, or it may focus only on a small part of it. You may also combine one or two types of the multiple possible ways of responding:

• agreement/disagreement/both agree and disagree – accepting or rejecting the author’s points in the text

• reflection – examining the ways in which the text affected your thinking on the topic

• conversation – demonstrating how your experiences build on, contradict, or alter the author’s ideas

• extension – pushing the ideas of the text further and seeing how those ideas might apply to different situations • tempering the position – raising concerns about the overlooked aspects of the text’s ideas

• rhetorical analysis – breaking down how the author uses language to communicate ideas

• strength of argument – questioning how the text supports its ideas

(Adapted from the Writing Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst)

**Essay Two: Arguing about Literature / Documented Essay**

[Note to faculty: This essay is built around poetry but could easily be switched out for short fiction or drama. If switching genre, you will want to change the pages in the text students read to direct them to the specifics (terms, elements, etc.) of the genre.]

Assignment

In this unit, we have been learning about research methods and discovering ways to discuss and write about literature, specifically poetry. This essay requires that you bring these two skills together to create an argument about a poem/poems that we have not discussed in class and to support that argument with secondary sources. You are now familiar with how to read a poem, the poetic elements that help you to analyze, and the ways that poetry works to evoke emotion and attention. In reading and responding to sources, you will be entering a literary conversation that is ongoing. Your essay contributes to that conversation. Here are the specifics: The essay length should be between 1500-2000 words and contain a minimum of four secondary sources as well as the primary source(s). Two of the secondary sources must be scholarly. In your argument, you may choose one of two approaches:

a) Literary Analysis: This type of paper argues for an interpretation of a poem or poems based on your analysis. For example, you might argue that tone and diction are essential in understanding the stance of the speaker in the poem or that war poems demonstrate a point about soldiering or war through the use of figurative language. You can tailor this prompt to your interests—the poem or poems you enjoy and the elements that you find most important in forwarding a theme in the work. If you decide to work with more than one poem, you will want to find a connection between them that suggests rich intersections.

b) Social Awareness and Critique: This type of paper argues that the poem(s) is an example of writing that challenges an assumption or seeks to enact change in some way. In this type of paper, you will need to identify an issue that the poem(s) addresses and argue what the poem does and how it does it. For example, you could argue that the poems that address immigration or immigrants bring awareness to the plight of immigrants today. In view of the current national discussions on immigration and connected issues, how might the voices of the poets who write about immigration add to the conversation? Do they challenge or confirm stated beliefs? In considering this prompt, you are thinking about the role of art in changing the world.

Due

Early draft: Class 13

Middle draft: Class 15

Editing Workshop: Class 17

Final draft: Class 18

Purpose

This essay project provides an opportunity for you to enter a literary conversation about your chosen topic that has been in process over time and engages many voices. With your argument, you become part of that literary conversation. In a successful essay, you will demonstrate the research skills acquired in this unit. Specifically, these include locating sources and categorizing them (popular, trade, scholarly), vetting sources (knowing the credentials of the writer), and choosing the most effective way to bring outside voices into your essay (summary, paraphrase, quotation) to support your central idea about the literary work. You will also demonstrate your abilities to analyze your chosen work of literature using the elements of the genre that are listed in our text and practiced in class. Your argument brings together your skills as a scholar in research and in analysis.

Requirements

Successful essays will:

* Demonstrate careful analysis of the literature using the elements of the genre
* Display an awareness of the published opinions and conversations on the work of literature through the incorporation of appropriate and carefully selected sources.
* Bring source material into the argument through the use of summary, quotation, and/or paraphrase by selecting the format you judge to be most effective in each case.
* Incorporate a minimum of 1 primary source (the literary work itself) and 4 secondary sources, 2 of which must be scholarly. You may use additional sources if you wish.
* Provide correct MLA parenthetical citation and documentation on a Works Cited page of all sources.

Grading Rubric

The FYW program assessment criteria is the basis for the grading rubric. These are listed on your syllabus and used in the previous essay rubric.

Steps

1. Choose the poem or poems you wish to explore after reviewing the list in Canvas.

2. Do preliminary work on the text (look up any terms you don’t understand, for

example), annotate as demonstrated in class and in our text.

3. Decide on a question or topic the work suggests to you.

4. Read widely to know what has been discussed about your text.

5. Refine your topic and/or point.

6. Choose sources that support your idea

7. Outline your argument

8. Draft and revise

9. Polish – edit and proofread. Use a proofreading checklist.

**Essay Three: Arguing with/against a Frame**

[Note to faculty: This assignment uses Feminist, Marxist, and Queer Theory but you are free to choose a few with which you are comfortable and to choose short texts that can work with the approaches you choose.]

**Assignment**

In this unit, we studied how reading a text through a theoretical lens or perspective brings specific elements of a text forward and opens up the text in a new direction. You have been introduced to various schools of literary theory or criticism and can now choose one of these (Feminist, Marxist, or Queer Theory) to use as a framework from which to argue about a specific text. Use the guidelines described under the specific school of criticism selected for this assignment that are listed in our text (pp. 294-99) to understand the emphasis and focus of each perspective and the limits of the theory. Read through the examples provided on pp. 306-12 of how the various theoretical lenses have been applied to the same story and notice the very different claims that result from the application. Choose one of the short texts from the list on Canvas and apply the framework provided by the critical lens to create your argument. You are not required to use an outside source but may if you choose. This essay should be 1500 words.

**Due**

Early draft: Class 21

Middle draft: Class 24

Editing Workshop: Class 25

Final draft: Class 27

**Purpose**

This essay project stretches your interpretive skills. In the previous essay, you used elements of a genre to help you argue for an interpretation of a literary work and secondary sources to support your point. In this essay, your choice of a theoretical framework helps you to unpack a text with a specific focus. For example, in a previous analysis, you might have noticed that a character in a text was a poor communicator of needs, which made him appear weak and ineffective. Using a Marxist approach, you might notice that the character was part of a system that covertly enforced the idea that a failing was the individual’s fault, which helps readers to see that the character was trapped and had no options. Once you understand the emphasis of the specific critical lens, you begin to question the text in a way you might not have considered before. Working through a theoretical framework gives you practice in the skills you will use in the future to critique social situations and events as well as forms of media beyond literary texts.

**Requirements**

Successful essays will:

1. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of a particular theoretical framework through its application.
2. Choose an effective pairing of text and critical approach.
3. Support all assertions with evidence from the text and, if needed, from a secondary source.
4. Quote and paraphrase effectively.
5. Attend to the criteria we have been using all semester: claim, organization, development, analysis, clarity of prose and revision.
6. Provide careful parenthetical citation and a Works Cited page for all sources.

**Grading Rubric**

The FYW program assessment criteria is the basis for the grading rubric. These are listed on your syllabus and used in the previous essay rubric.

**Steps**

1. Choose the text you wish to explore after reviewing the list in Canvas.
2. Choose the critical approach you believe will offer you a rich opportunity for analysis.
3. Create some questions that the approach suggests to you to begin your critical work on the text.
4. Do preliminary work on the text (look up any terms you don’t understand, for example), annotate it with the questions you have created in mind.
5. Craft a tentative claim idea.
6. Outline your argument
7. Draft and revise
8. Polish – edit and proofread. Use a proofreading checklist.

**Writer’s letters**

Along with each of your three final essay assignments, you will be submitting a writer’s letter, which will serve as an introduction to your essay. These letters, addressed to me, will offer you an opportunity to reflect on the composing process, as well as provide some context to me as one of your readers. Below are some guiding questions for you to consider. You do not have to answer all of these questions; focus on the ones that seem most useful for the essay that you’re working on. I may adjust these questions depending on the essay. Please include your writer’s letter as the first page of your essay. Each one should be approximately 400 words. Note that these letters will be graded separately from your essays (based on the thoroughness of your reflection and length) and will comprise 10% of your final grade for the class.

1. What revision did you make on this essay based on feedback from your peers and me? What revisions did you choose not to make and why?
2. What would you still change or develop about this essay if you had more time and space?
3. What is your most beautiful sentence in the essay and why?
4. Show me your editing (or revision); include one paragraph before and after editing/revision.
5. What problems with style or editing have you noticed in your own writing and how are you working to address them?
6. What specific concerns would you like me to address in my response?
7. What have you learned about writing and the topic you’re writing about in the process of composing and revising this essay?

**Discussion board entries**

Throughout the semester, as indicated on the syllabus, I will ask you to respond to prompts on our Canvas discussion board. Your responses will serve as both a way to reflect on the reading and also to brainstorm/build toward your next essay. Discussion posts are intended to be a space for more informal writing—I am mainly concerned that you (1) address the prompt and (2) fulfill the length requirement of 300 words. I will not assess mechanical or grammatical issues in these posts, as their primary purpose is idea-generation. Feel free to use material that you generate in these posts in your essay.

We will, on occasion, read each other’s posts in class, so write with an audience of your peers and me in mind. All prompts are located on Canvas under “discussion board” in our course section.